

Officer Leadership Program

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), Office of Enforcement and Emergency Services, sponsors an ongoing, cooperative program with participating law enforcement agencies around the country. In this program, law enforcement agencies send an officer to our Washington, D.C. for approximately a one year assignment. These officers help develop state-of-the-art materials on technological subjects, as well as improve traffic enforcement strategies and training programs on a myriad of traffic safety initiatives. Traffic safety priority programs and initiatives are enhanced when officers review and play an active role in the development of our national programs.

Officers return to their agency with better understanding of the Federal contract and grant processes, how to respond to requests for proposals, and be more familiar with the long-term, highway safety and law enforcement traffic safety programs of NHTSA and the Federal Highway Administration.

Guidance

Each officer in the program is mentored by a member of the office staff. The staff consists of persons with background in law enforcement, research, training, public information, management and related fields. Each officer has the opportunity to attend meetings and conferences that shape national law enforcement and highway safety policies.

Specific Assignments

This program provides an individualized experience for each officer in traffic law enforcement research, training and administrative activities. Officers have a primary work assignment and additional projects necessary for an overview of traffic law enforcement and highway safety program management. Assignments are based on current needs and demands of the national traffic safety and law enforcement community. These activities will also be congruent with their agency's priorities.

Once assigned a project, the officer provides a service or develops a product or training program. Some examples of completed projects include: traffic enforcement and its impact on crime; mobilizing law enforcement agencies to enforce traffic laws; cooperative traffic enforcement efforts; and ways law enforcement can use the media to publicize the activities of your agency.

Upon completion of the program, the officer produces a written summary of the officer's primary work assignment. Often this becomes a publication that is distributed to law enforcement and highway safety agencies around the country.

Administrative Issues

Officers should discuss this program with their administrators to determine the agency's willingness to enter into a cooperative agreement with NHTSA. The agency must be prepared to pay the applicant's salary and fringe benefits during the program. NHTSA typically reimburses the participating agency for the cost of the officer's move to and from Washington, D.C., and for living expenses, based on the eligible costs allowed by the officer's agency. We reimburse the officer's travel costs in support of the project, based on the federal travel regulations. NHTSA will keep the burden of cost to the officer's agency at a minimum. Officers arriving from outside the Washington metropolitan area will receive some logistical help in securing living accommodations.

Eligibility

The program is open to any active, full-time law enforcement official who has a strong interest in traffic safety. Preferably, the officer should have five or more years of service at the rank of Sergeant or Lieutenant with supervisory traffic experience. Officers should be self starters, upwardly mobile, have excellent writing and presentation skills for effectively communicating with law enforcement and highway safety administrators at national meetings and other unique law enforcement skills that may be appropriate to the specific assignment.

Application and Selection

There is no formal application process or submission deadline. Letters of interest from the officer's administrator are accepted throughout the year and should be sent to the NHTSA Police Traffic Services (PTS) Division. The selection process is based on varying specific issues and project needs.

Benefits

By participating in the program:

- The officer will develop a broader knowledge of law enforcement and highway safety issues, policy making skills and familiarity of State and national law enforcement organizations.
- The officer will meet and work with law enforcement and highway safety leaders at the national, state and local level.

- The officer will develop a strong support network and gain national exposure for him and herself and the law enforcement agency.
- The officer will acquire a knowledge of the Section 402 highway safety grant programs as well as vehicle, engineering and driver behavior issues.

Officers who have worked in this program contend that this opportunity is a career highlight and a strong and positive learning experience. When officers return to their agency, this experience will help the agency more effectively apply for Federal grants and contracts, respond to requests for proposals, and to be more competitive in securing and conducting law enforcement traffic safety programs.

Officers, the agencies and NHTSA all benefit from this traffic law enforcement leadership program.

Contact:

Division Chief, Police Traffic Services
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Room 5119 (NTS-41)
Washington, D.C. 20590
(202) 366-4295